by the FE in the concerned Indian Mission. In absence of fulfilling the above criteria, the emigration clearance will be granted only on the basis of the availability of the specimen employment contract/labour contract duly attested by the Indian Mission concerned.

* This Ministry has also entered into bilateral labour agreements with the UAE and Kuwait, to ensure protection to emigrant workers. These MOUs provide for a Joint Committee consisting of representatives of both countries to meet every six months to discuss and resolve grievances of workers. Further, to ensure protection and welfare of Indian workers comprehensive amendmnet of the Emigration Act, 1983, is already underway.

(c) Any recruitment of Indian nationals for employment abroad without registration certificate under Section 10 of the Emigration Act, 1983 is an offence punishable under Section 24 of the Emigration Act, 1983.

On receipt of complaint against registered Recruiting Agents show-cause notice is served which may lead in serious cases to suspension and cancellation of the Registration Certificate and forfeiture of Bank Guarantee. The complaints received against the unregistered recruiting agents are referred to concerned State Governments/Police Authorities/Protectors of Emigrants for investigation and action for violation of Section 10 of Emigration Act, 1983 and other provisions of the law as appropriate.

Restriction on employers and agents

3314. DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA:
SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is going to impose restrictions on employers and agents for taking domestic servants abroad;

(b) if so, the details of guidelines/rules in this regard;

(c) whether Government is aware that there are organized gangs who recruit the Indian women for domestic help and take them abroad and force them into prostitution; and

(d) if so, the number of such cases that have been detected by Government and the number of women who have been rescued so far?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) No emigrant worker including domestic servants under the Emigration Check Required (ECR) category seeking employment to any of the 17 ECR countries can proceed abroad without seeking emigration clearance from the offices of Protectors of Emigrants (POEs) under the Emigration Act, 1983. The emigration clearance to domestic servants/unskilled/ vulnerable category is granted based on the duly attested employment documents by the concerned Indian Missions. Further in case of recruitment of individual Indian emigrant worker including women directly by the Foreign Employer a bank guarantee of US $ 2500 is to be deposited by the FE in the concerned Indian Mission. No women below the age of 30 years having an ECR passport can take up employment in ECR countries.

(c) and (d) Any recruitment of Indian nationals including women for employment abroad without registration certificate under Section 10 of the Emigration Act, 1983 is an offence

punishable under Section 24 of the Emigration Act, 1983. Instances of Indian women workers abroad, being in distress, are brought to the notice of this Ministry from time to time and immediate remedial measures are taken through our Missions abroad.

Demonstration in front of White House

†3315. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some Indian workers have demonstrated in front of White House in America on the misuse of visas;

(b) whether the above said matter has been taken up with the concerned officers;

(c) whether Indian companies are involved in it;

(d) whether the above said matter has been investigated; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (e) As per the reports received from the Indian Mission in USA, 590 Indian workers were recruited and deployed in the yards of M/s Signal International, a marine fabircation company, locted at Mississippi and Texas. They had gone to US on H2B visas (Guest Workers Visa Programme) valid initially for 10 months, extendable at the discretion of the employer and the US authorities. The workers were aggrieved on account of alleged poor accommodation and amenities, deductions from their salary for accommodation, food, electricity water and also non-fulfilment of alleged initial commitment of permanent residency status.

The workers demonstrated outside the office of their employer, held a press conference, filed a court case against their employer, met the Indian Ambassador in Washington and also demonstrated in front of the White House.

The Indian Mission in USA has approached the US Government to conduct a detailed investigation on the complaints of Indian workers and take remedial measures. The Indian Mission has also taken steps to withhold visas from the main US recruiters involved to prevent them from entering India to conduct recruiting operations.

The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has suspended the license of M/s Dewan Consultants, Mumbai, the Indian recruiting agent involved in this recruitment, and M/s. S. Mansur & Co., Mumbai, black listed the foreign employer and is also initiating legal action against the Recruiting Agent for violation of Emigration Act, 1983.

Indian workers in American shipyard

3316. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:
SHRI DARA SINGH:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of plight of over a hundred Indian workers allegedly kept in Subhuman conditions at a shipyard on America's Gulf Coast;

(b) whether these workders have allegedly paid up to Rs. 8—10 lakh to a Mumbai recruiter

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.